

REMARKS

Claims 87, 90 and 92 - 126 are presently pending in the application.

Applicants have canceled claims 85, 86, 88, 89 and 91, without prejudice for future examination upon submission of a continuation application. The Examiner rejected claims 85, 86, 88, 89 and 91 over the prior art of record. Since these claims have been so canceled, the rejections concerning them are moot for the present application.

Claims 87 and 90, objected to as depending from a rejected claim, but apparently otherwise allowable, have been amended to be in independent form incorporating the subject matter of all of the claims from which they depended, directly or indirectly. Accordingly, claims 87 and 90 now should be in condition for allowance.

Claim 99 has been amended to change the term "in the form of" to --included--, so that the claim is more clear. Claims 123 and 124 have been amended to change the term "medical device" to --wrap--, to more accurately refer to the subject matter of the invention of claim 122 from which they directly or indirectly depend. In view of these minor amendments, it is believed that claims 99, 123 and 124 are in condition for allowance.

The amendments are proper after the final rejection because they are of a formal nature to place the application into condition for allowance without adding any new matter. Therefore, no new issues have been raised. Entry of the amendments are respectfully solicited.

In the Office Action, the Examiner indicated that claims 92 - 98, 100 - 122, 125 and 126 appear to be free of the prior art of record.

In the Office Action, the Examiner did not respond to the issue of the lack of consideration of German patent document 197 15 149 A1 (the "Foreign Reference"), that was raised at pages 14 and 15 of the Amendment filed February 17, 2004 (the "Prior Amendment"). The Examiner is respectfully requested to review the cited portion of the Prior Amendment, and to consider and acknowledge such consideration of the Foreign Reference.

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Reply to Office Action of May 13, 2004


In view of the preceding amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 87, 90 and 92 - 126 are in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and withdrawal of all rejections and objections and an early Notice of Allowance are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

REINER CLASS *et al.*

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By:



ALAN S. NADEL

Registration No. 27,363

AKIN GUMP STRAUSS HAUER & FELD LLP

One Commerce Square

2005 Market Street, Suite 2200

Philadelphia, PA 19103-7013

Telephone: 215-965-1200

Direct Dial: 215-965-1280

Facsimile: 215-965-1210

E-Mail: anadel@akingump.com

ASN/AB:rc
Attachments: